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FREE-AIR CONDITIONS

W. R. GREGG. **Average Free-Air Conditions as Observed by Means of Kites at Drexel Aerological Station, Nebr., During the Period November, 1915, to December, 1918, Inclusive.** Diagr., bibliogr. *Monthly Weather Rev.*, Vol. 48, 1920, No. 1, pp. 1-11.

Two years ago, Mr. Gregg, in charge of the aerological division of the Weather Bureau, published a summary of the free-air conditions above Mt. Weather, Virginia (*Monthly Weather Rev.*, Vol. 46, 1918, pp. 11-21). The data on winds, pressures, temperatures, and densities proved to be so valuable in the aviation and artillery branches of the army that a similar summary of the observations made by means of kites over the Great Plains was undertaken and is now published. A few striking features are worth mention. Although March is warmer than February, April is colder than March at all levels from 1.5 up to 5 kilometers at least; in winter the temperature at a height of 2 kilometers is higher on the average than at the surface; wind velocity at all seasons practically doubles in the lower 500 meters; and, no matter what the surface wind direction, the wind at 5 kilometers is usually from between southwest and northwest, the north-of-west directions aloft being associated with surface winds around to northeast, and the south-of-west directions aloft being above surface winds southerly or easterly as far as east-northeast.

Little attempt is made to discuss the data, except to make clear their degree of accuracy and how the averages were made and to bring out the salient features of the tables and some contrasts with data obtained in Blue Hill and Mt. Weather kite flights. Obviously, the Weather Bureau's daily operation of kite stations is rapidly adding a third dimension to American climatology.

CHARLES F. BROOKS

CORRESPONDENCE

The University, Sheffield, England,
February 18, 1920.

To the Editor of the "Geographical Review":

In his interesting article on Norwegian work in Spitsbergen published in the *Geographical Review* for October-November, 1919, M. Charles Rabot has allowed his well-known admiration for Norway to distort his outlook on the work of British mining companies in Spitsbergen. But since his facts are avowedly taken from Norwegian sources, not in all cases of recent date, this is intelligible.

Certain historical statements, however, require correction. M. Rabot disputes the position of Spitsbergen as a *terra nullius* up to the recent date of Norwegian sovereignty. In this he is wrong. Norway-Denmark's sovereignty of Greenland could not, as he asserts, embrace Spitsbergen when once it was discovered that Spitsbergen was not part of Greenland. This fact was established early in the seventeenth century and disposes of all Danish claims. Moreover, M. Rabot seems unaware that Norway, Sweden, and Russia, discussing the Spitsbergen problem in 1912, proposed a settlement in which the first words were "*Spitsbergen skal forbli terra nullius*" (Spitsbergen shall remain a *terra nullius*). Furthermore at the Spitsbergen Conference held in 1914 the participating powers met on the distinct understanding that Spitsbergen was a *terra nullius*. This was pointed out in my article on Spitsbergen in the *Geographical Review* for May, 1919. These historical facts are of importance in their bearing on the recent decision of the Paris Conference to give Norway sovereignty in Spitsbergen. This sovereignty is not operative in non-Norwegian estates, which to all intents and purposes are extra-territorial.

Yours faithfully,

R. N. RUDMOSE BROWN